An 11-year-old girl in Texas died by suicide after she was bullied about her family's immigration status, her mother says

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Jocelynn Rojo Carranza was bullied and taunted at school over her family's immigration status, her mother Marbella Carranza told CNN affiliate KUVN.
Boys & Girls Club of Cooke County

Editor's Note: Help is available if you or someone you know is struggling with suicidal thoughts or mental health matters. Call or text 988, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

(CNN) — A young girl's death by suicide is being investigated by school police after her mother says she was bullied by other students who hurled insults at her, claiming her family was in the US illegally.

Eleven-year-old Jocelynn Rojo Carranza died on February 8 – five days after her mother found her unresponsive at their home in Gainesville, Texas, according to an online obituary. Her funeral took place Wednesday morning.

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"All week I've been waiting for a miracle - waiting for my daughter to get better," her mother Marbella Carranza told CNN affiliate KUVN. "But unfortunately there was nothing that could be done."

Jocelynn was bullied and taunted at school over her family's immigration status, Carranza told CNN Wednesday. Jocelynn attended Gainesville Intermediate School, according to KUVN.

"They were going to call immigration so they could take her parents away and she would be left alone," Carranza told KUVN. She did not address the immigration status of the family in her interview with KUVN.

Carranza told CNN that she has spoken to investigators about what led to Jocelynn's death, but there's "nothing concrete" yet. She had no previous indications that her daughter was being bullied, she said.

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"I never knew anything about that," Carranza told CNN in Spanish on Wednesday. "My daughter never showed changes. I mean, there was never anything that gave me a sign that she was suffering from bullying."

Carranza claims her daughter's school was aware of the alleged bullying but did not tell her, and she only learned her daughter had been receiving counseling at school when investigators told her, Carranza told KUVN. CNN has reached out to the school for comment.

"It appears the school was aware of it all, but they never, they never told me what was happening with my daughter," Carranza said. "It appears she would go once or twice a week to counseling to report what was happening," she told KUVN.

"(I want) justice because it's not fair - the school was negligent for not keeping me informed of what was going on with my daughter," she added.

An investigation is underway, Gainesville police said in a statement referring calls to the Gainesville Independent School District Police, which is investigating the bullying allegations.

The Gainesville Independent School District did not acknowledge whether it was aware of reports of bullying against Jocelynn.

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"Whenever we receive a report of bullying, we respond swiftly to ensure all students are safe physically and emotionally. While we cannot release any information about specific students or incidents, our schools have several policies in place to combat bullying and resolve conflicts," the district told CNN in a statement.

Another school in the district called the incident a "serious accident" in an email to parents that did not address the bullying allegations.

Carranza described the day she found her daughter, on February 3, to KUVN.

"When I got home, they were still working on her, trying to revive her, she had been without life for a long time," she said.

Jocelynn Rojo Carranza died by suicide after she was bullied about her family's immigration status.
Courtesy Angelica Carranza

Family and friends mourn Jocelynn's death

Hundreds of friends and family members, including many children, packed St. Mary Catholic Church on Wednesday to attend Jocelynn's funeral. A group of mourners wore white sweatshirts with the young girl's picture emblazoned on it, while others wore pastel shades of blue, lavender or pink in her honor.

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During the service, her loved ones could be heard crying as a mariachi band in the balcony of the church played somber music. In the same church where Jocelynn was baptized 11 years ago, her casket laid draped in a white cloth with a crucifix on top.

"She didn't know how to understand the things that happen in the world," Gelasio Garcia, a deacon at the church, said at the service.

Jocelynn is remembered as "a wonderful daughter, sister, niece and friend to everyone," in the online obituary.

Carranza said Jocelynn told her every day that she loved her.

"I remember her fondly because she was a very happy girl, she was a joyful girl," she said.

The Boys & Girls Club of Cooke County, where Jocelynn was a member, said she was "kind, sweet and a great friend to many." Her friends at the club said their favorite memories with her included climbing trees together, her making them laugh and being able to tell her anything.

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"We are deeply saddened by the loss of Jocelynn but we are hopeful that her story will change the lives of many," the club said Wednesday evening. "Her story is a reminder to always be kind because you never know what someone is going through."

She played the French horn, made TikTok videos, swam, did cartwheels and spent Friday nights watching movies with her family, according to the obituary.

"She loved when her grandma took her to get her nails done," the obituary reads.

This is a developing story and will be updated.

CNN's Caroll Alvarado contributed to this report.

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